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ABSTRACT

Advisory work and its relation to teachers' centers is described. The following topics are considered: (1) differences between advisory work and other staff development; (2) purposes of advisory work; (3) methods advisors use; (4) realistic expectations of the advisor role: dilemmas and discouragements; (5) characteristics, skills, and experiences advisory work requires; (6) selection, training and ongoing development of advisors; and (7) relationship of advisory work to teachers' centers. Included in this paper are recommendations for further reading about the advisor role. (JD)

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The Advisor: Emissary from Teachers' Center To Classroom

GRETCHEN THOMAS

It is as advisors, not as supervisors, that we must be ready to give assistance. As advisors to teachers, we must be prepared to find within them, within their situations, and within ourselves the potential and the promise of those new paths waiting to be developed. I believe that if some such starting point is not accepted, the struggle to evolve better classrooms will be longer and harder, and at best, a reliving of history rather than a hopeful extension of it.[1]

FRANCES POCKMAN HAWKINS

Introduction

In September 1977 the Teachers' Centers Exchange held a Workparty at the Mountain View Center for Environmental Education in Boulder, Colorado. At this meeting, supported in part by the Ford Foundation, over 40 advisors gathered for discussions and workshops on advisory work.[2] Participants also included three interns from Mountain View's intern advisor project, documented by Barbara Seckinger and supported by the Rockefeller Brothers Fund. During the three days, many participants kept extensive notes and wrote about their personal reactions and previous experiences. Throughout the following paper, paraphrased and quoted thoughts from their journals are used to describe advisory work and its relation to teachers' centers. These quotations and paraphrased ideas provide the essential substance of this paper; they convey the expertise and commitment of an exceptional group of educators.

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This Occasional Paper is divided into the following sections, which represent several facets of advisory work. The sections do not have to be read sequentially.

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Successful teaching is an art that takes insight, knowledge, and many years of experience to develop; it cannot develop in isolation. Beginning teachers need intensive support and advice from someone they have chosen as mentor. After a few years these earlier needs are followed by desire for a nearby, non-evaluative advisor to help at times when the now-experienced teacher is building new curriculum or working out implications of research or learning theory for classroom practice.

Teachers... need to be able to visit each other's classrooms and have officially sanctioned time to talk with other teachers.... Inservice education must provide for the continuing growth of teachers at all levels of experience and maturity. If the most experienced teachers are shortchanged, as they so often are because their problems seem less urgent, school systems will continue to lose potential educational leaders.[3]

Eventually, the very experienced teachers begin to look for a structure which will allow them to share their expertise with other teachers and at the same time require continuing reevaluation and improvement of their abilities. For more than a decade, *advisors* have been working in American school districts to provide this kind of ongoing professional support in the classroom to teachers of all stages who are bent on innovation or self-improvement.

The working relationship of an advisor and a teacher develops in a way unique to their personalities, values, styles of working, and settings, but all advisors share common purposes and methods which comprise "the advisor role." Several teachers have described advisors as people with quite a different view of adult learning from any they've experienced before—with the exception in some cases of their student teaching supervisor. Teachers have described advisors as:

Educators who believe learning takes place best among colleagues exploring a subject together, who believe that the desire to learn must come from the learner, and who believe that learning must be individualized so that it suits the specific people involved and their particular situation.

Someone who helps teachers examine what they want to have happen with their students and why, and then demystifies the process of going about it....

Someone who practices the art of drawing out the best in a teacher and in a school. Not master teachers who "have the answers" but colleagues committed to working and learning alongside teachers....[4]

Actually, the term "advisor" can be misleading, since advisors tend to avoid giving advice. They function more as non-evaluative, trusted encouragers and stimulators. In some districts the name "helping teacher" is purposely used because it is free of any "I can tell you how to do it" implications. Advisors do not serve as a crutch for a teacher with a particular difficulty, nor are they merely sympathetic counselors. They are successful teachers who, within a voluntary relationship of mutual respect and trust, enable their colleagues to become increasingly successful. They work not only by sharing their own expertise with teachers—indeed, it forms the basis for their work—but most effectively by enabling teachers to discover their own.

It's fairly easy to walk in and tell someone what to do. It's not too difficult to listen to a problem and say what you would do. To listen to people and then help them think through what is the next best step for them, that is an extraordinarily demanding way to work.[5]

Differences Between Advisory Work and Other Staff Development

The advisor role offers a way to increase the effectiveness of conventional staff development positions—inservice coordinator, curriculum specialist, supervisor of beginning teachers, linking or change agent. To the extent that such staff development personnel perceive and value the differences in being an advisor and are able to incorporate this approach into their way of working, the advisor role can offer a promising expansion of their services.

One difference in advising is that its focal point is direct, concentrated work on each teacher's own situation. Thus it is a service which can directly reach those teachers who have been reluctant to take courses or become involved in special programs—whether they lack the energy to innovate, or are insecure about their inadequacies, or are more expert than the level of the course. Advisory work is uniquely able to help first- and second-year teachers with their needs for on-the-spot help and support when they are feeling inadequate. Because the advisor's work rests upon a thorough knowledge of each teacher's values, attitudes, students, and setting, its heart is the regularly scheduled personal contact between advisor and teacher. In the beginning many advisors work alongside teachers (rather than simply observe), so that the advisor has actually taught the particular children in their classroom. Subsequent discussions between teacher and advisor can then move from speculations about "what might happen" to the living proof of "what actually takes place."

> Teacher: *No one is really interested in hearing you talk about your kids—they don't know them and they feel it's your problem—although to you it's the most interesting subject in the world. You keep talking about them to people who don't want to hear it, but an advisor is somebody who knows your children and so she's also anxious to talk about them. She doesn't just "understand," she shares your feelings because she's intimate with those kids too. That's something that a teacher rarely experiences. Every teacher needs someone who understands their kids from that point of view.*

In addition to working with teachers in their classrooms and having regular contact with principals and other school personnel, advisors may help identify, locate, or occasionally make instructional materials or equipment the students need. They help teachers rework their

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Purposes of Advisory Work

- **To improve the quality of teachers' work—of day-to-day classroom practice—by means of long-term in-classroom assistance, and to raise the quality of students' learning by suiting the learning environment and curriculum to students' interests and abilities.**
- **To help teachers select and adapt—rather than adopt—curricular materials and programs.**
- **To help teachers find and make better use of existing academic, inservice, and community resources.**
- **To release and develop the potential of teachers who want to change and enrich their teaching but who need something different from conventional inservice or graduate courses.**
- **To help teachers understand and articulate their own and their students' needs and purposes, and to question why they are teaching in a particular way. To help teachers express their life views and values through their work.**
- **To establish a network of people who will give each other long-term support for improving their teaching. To break down barriers of loneliness and isolation between teachers and help them become interdependent workers and learners. To enable expert teachers to find avenues for sharing their expertise and thus avoid "burnout" from overwork or stagnation.**
- **To support teachers working under the tension produced by daily emergencies, by mandated programs, by irrelevant or even damaging evaluations of students. To be an "ombudsman" helping teachers find creative ways not only to survive but to sustain their beliefs and improve their school climate.**
- **To stimulate teachers' abilities to observe, reflect, draw conclusions, define alternatives, and encourage them to value their own resourcefulness, power, and professionalism.**
- **To use the strength of the advisor/teacher unit to observe, reflect upon, and document children's work and behavior, and thus add to the knowledge of and research on how children learn. To make classroom practice reflect intelligent use of the best knowledge available about human development and learning. To bridge the gap between the findings of trustworthy educational research and actual classroom practice.**

classroom curriculum so that it builds upon their students' prior experiences and knowledge, thus contributing to more meaningful study. But advisors believe that strengthening curriculum in this way and "provisioning" the classroom are not enough; another primary purpose is stimulating teachers' own critical thinking about their work and how children learn, and enabling teachers to become resources for each other. This emphasis on reflection and mutually supportive relationships—an emphasis shared by teachers' centers—is the second important difference between advisory work and conventional inservice or staff development programs.

> Advisor: *The "expert" has a place and is valuable, but it is crucial that teachers develop processes for enriching their own knowledge, learning to rely on each other in pairs and in groups. Teachers often come to me with a fear that they don't know enough to do a good job. I point out to them all the skills and experiences they already have, and help them feel confident. Soon they see that the experts are no more expert than teachers are, they have just had the opportunity—and the time and objectivity of not being in the classroom every day—to put their thoughts together.... Teachers have within themselves many strengths and capacities. If provided settings and support, these capacities will flourish—so that what grows and evolves within each teacher is what was always there. I have seen that teachers can, through their own observation, reflection, and research, come up with much of the information they need to answer their own questions. Their classrooms become testing grounds for further exploration, and teachers then become resources for each other.*

Another key difference is that, unlike curriculum specialists, preservice supervisors, and principals, the advisor is not responsible for supervising or in any way evaluating the teacher. There is no judgment of the teacher's performance, except in the sense of one person working with another, trying out ideas and then offering suggestions and constructive criticism.

> Teacher: *...[The advisor] was willing to try anything . . . and willing to try it the way I wanted to do it. She wasn't forcing anything that she had preconceived on me. You got the feeling that she respected the fact that I've been doing this for years.*[6]

Unlike inservice coordinators or special program resource teachers, the advisor is not responsible for installing officially adopted programs, implementing official policies, or directing teachers' use of a particular approach or set of materials. This freedom from evaluating teachers and from imposing mandated programs is zealously guarded by advisors.

> *I love being an advisor because I'm not selling anything. I have no program to coordinate, no subject I must specialize in, no materials I must get teachers to use, and no mandates I have to oversee. Our conversations are confidential; I am not reporting on the teacher to anyone, and I'm not interested in comparing teachers or schools. Instead I can help teachers with a wide range of ideas and materials, and the teachers know that just because I suggest it doesn't mean it has to be used. For me the freedom from having to be an expert means that the teacher and I share a lot of the learning and excitement of discovering new things. It's never a one-way or a topdown relationship. It is an experience that involves explorations, with both people involved in the search. There is a balance, a dance between searching out the other person's thinking and offering your own.*

This should not imply that the advisor is value-free. On the contrary, advisors frequently make clear what they believe. Within a basic respect for each other and a flexible view of where the work may lead, the teacher's concerns serve as starting points, while the advisor's values, beliefs, and past experiences provide a framework for focusing their discussions. Hearing the advisor's clear expression of beliefs helps the teacher articulate and continue to develop a personal world view, using the advisor as a sounding board rather than a mirror.

> *Effective advisors cannot be educationally neutral. Advising is demanding, often exhausting work, and the commitment that is needed to do this job well can grow only out of a firmly held belief about how teachers and children learn.*[7]

Advisors usually act as "generalists" who are prepared to help teachers think through any area of their work. This is possible because advisors' expertise lies not only in their own extensive teaching experience, but also in the process of helping adults examine their own and children's learning—in listening, observing, discussing, reflecting, setting expectations, questioning, clarifying, and relating all they learn to principles of human development.

> Advisor: *I am a question-raiser, a person-stretcher. I take a piece of time or an activity that has happened and look with the teacher at what came before, at what she had hoped would come out of it, and at what did come out of it.*

Of course advisors share their knowledge and skills as well as offering support, and they are adept at finding other resources to provide ex-

pert knowledge in a particular content area and are willing to gather whatever support is needed when—as frequently happens—they are not able to provide it.

An important difference between an advisor's work and that of a "change agent"—an outside catalyst initiating improvement in a school or a program—is that an advisor focuses *first* on helping individual teachers improve their teaching practice. No one is required to

set aside individual classroom improvement for work on a school-wide project. Change agents seldom pay such careful attention to an individual teacher's interests and needs; they almost never have actual knowledge of teachers, students, classroom settings, teaching methods, and particular curricula. They are less likely to focus on competencies the teacher has already acquired, nor do they guard so carefully as advisors do against working in ways that might make the teacher dependent or uninventive.

A final difference between advising and many inservice programs is that advising works within the teacher's long-lasting and far-reaching development. Teachers may work with various kinds of advisory support through different stages of professional development as they bring, over time, a diverse set of needs and enthusiasms to their work—problems to solve and talents to contribute. Advisory programs are funded and scheduled with a realistic understanding of the small (and therefore secure) steps which make up such enduring efforts. As teachers and advisors work together, their discussions tend to move from how to solve immediate problems, to organizational questions (how to involve parents in the classroom, group children, schedule the day), to needs of particular children, and then to ways of deepening and extending particular learning experiences. For an advisor working from a teachers' center, there will be a natural development from regular in-classroom advising, to meeting less frequently with a particular teacher, to meeting with a group of teachers in a support or study group.[3] There is no end point in a teacher's growth, interest in new curriculum, or in new students. But the source of support must change from an advisor, to a group of teachers who are supporting each other, and/or to a principal or resource teacher so the advisor is free to move on to helping other teachers. One advisor commented on "ending":

> *Just when I think an end point has finally been reached with one teacher or a group of teachers—that my work with them is no longer valuable to them or to me—they come to me asking to be trained as advisors themselves. They no longer need help with their own teaching of children, they need help with learning to work with adults and support for reaching out beyond the confines of their previous work. So it seems the work never really ends, it is just transformed.*

Many individuals in various staff development roles have been working with teachers for years in ways similar to these. A great many staff developers value the advisor/teacher type of relationship and naturally spend as much time "advising" as their other responsibilities allow. These people have been very effective. What makes advisors even more effective is the fact that they spend *all* their time advising, that they work in voluntary, non-evaluative situations, and that their focus is the teachers' long-term professional development.

Methods Advisors Use

1. *Acting as a participant-observer in the classroom; in follow-up discussions with the teacher, planting the seeds of innovation and offering technical advice.*

- Planning with a teacher for more effective room arrangement, scheduling, and use of learning materials.

- Helping a teacher develop more informative and efficient record-keeping methods—meshing personal style of teaching and writing with school or district requirements.

- Giving a teacher informative feedback from observations of students and classroom activity—stimulating awareness of the relationship of curriculum to individual and group needs.

Teacher: *One thing we've been doing is trying to make the environment more humane. Now things happen between two individuals, rather than between a teacher and a student caught in stereotyped roles. I don't just blurt out, "Stop what you're doing." I ask myself first, "Why is he doing it?" And that has eased things up, made it more friendly. It takes more energy to deal with things this way; but we're all less tense, so it's worth it.*

- Helping a teacher think through and carry out specific plans for students' learning based on the advisor's and teacher's observations of an individual student's behavior, language, work, and social interactions over time. Helping the teacher move beyond preconceptions about a student by means of thoughtful observations, discussions with parents, and collections of the student's work.

Teacher: *Because of our discussions I spend a lot more time thinking about an individual kid's understanding of mathematics instead of what math I could do for the whole class. I've gotten to know each kid much, much better at this point in the year than I ever had before.*

- Working with students so the teacher can observe the particular mood, relationship, conversations, and so forth between the advisor and the students and see principles of child development translated into actual learning situations.

Teacher: *One thing I became really aware of was [the advisor's] ability to wait until the things came from the children. I will decide what point I want to get across and then my tendency is to get that point across no matter what. It would be really hard for me to... wait till the next day, and then have it come out.... [The advisor] would encourage them to just think about it and mull it over in their minds and when they were starting to get on the right track she was very supportive.... That was really good for me to see and think about.*[9]

- Working with students during class time so the teacher is free to try out new curriculum or new methods with a small group. Accompanying the class on trips which are part of an overall curriculum plan the teacher and advisor are working on together.

2. *Improving school climate and facilitating school-site-based staff development.*

- Encouraging and helping the principal and other out-of-classroom teachers and support staff to establish advisory-type relationships with teachers in their school.
- Working with teachers who have been involuntarily transferred to unfamiliar subject areas or new grade levels.
- Helping teachers recruit and educate parent volunteers, community resource workers, and student teachers.
- Helping teachers and principals articulate their educational philosophy and interpret their work in terms of school and classroom objectives—for the community as well as for themselves.
- Relating information about the interesting and successful practices of one teacher to another in the same school. Matching and introducing teachers with common concerns and interests, and encouraging them to form study groups or develop school-wide curriculum projects.

Advisor: *The teachers' lounge is a very important place for spreading the network of people who want to work together in this way. I always eat my lunch there. It's how other people in the school learn what we do and get drawn into it.*

3. *Motivating and enabling teachers' pursuit of professional improvement at every stage of their careers.*

- Providing "active learning" opportunities for teachers to explore new curriculum materials so they can anticipate how their students will respond.

Teacher: *I've learned how to introduce the materials, and how to set them up physically in the room, and how to encourage everyone to ask questions as they work, but the most important thing was realizing from a student's point of view what it feels like to be doing something new, experimenting with it, how much fun it is and how little it is necessary for the teacher to teach content. What you do instead—and it's still hard for me to do—is get inside the kids' heads to see what they're thinking so you recognize the right moment to say just one more thing or ask a provocative question that will trigger their understanding and their interest. I've learned that when I have trouble asking the right questions or finding the right moment, I need to work more on my own with the materials and then it comes easily again. That's as true for math and reading as for science. It's such a neat feeling to be able to discover things on your own and to do things yourself.*

- Encouraging teachers to draw on their own particular background, skills, and interests as they design a year-long curriculum.
- Helping a teacher gather the resources and find the specialists who will provide depth of scholarship and breadth of experience as the teacher approaches a subject from new perspectives, takes on an entirely new area, or begins to teach a variety of subject areas.

  Advisor: *I don't try to improve all possible aspects of teachers' work, but to increase their ability to be self-reliant learners—learners who are neither dependent upon an advisor or others for motivation, nor autonomous in their search for professional growth, but rather learners who are interdependent with their colleagues.*

- Providing a climate of moral support within which a teacher is free to experiment. Helping a teacher recognize and take credit for successful work. Encouraging a teacher to express feelings about performance, students, school. Sharing with a teacher the difficulties and setbacks the advisor experienced in classroom teaching. Encouraging risk-taking and allowing space for failure. Making clear that the advisor is learning as much as the teacher as they work together.

  Advisor: *Building on the teacher's strengths is not just an initial relations-building tactic; it also serves to help the teacher articulate her understandings to herself, to identify focal points around which to expand and extend, to make visible again—and therefore more useable—what she has been taking for granted.*

4. *Enabling teachers to articulate their values and goals and make a lifetime habit of thoughtful reflection upon their work.*

- Interviewing teachers about their teaching and about specific students as a method for helping them sort out and express their beliefs.

  Advisor: *After a few years of teaching almost all teachers know what's good for children and why, if only at an intuitive level. Within each teacher, then, there are implicit theories which I help the teacher articulate.*

- Encouraging teachers to make time to reflect about their work through regular journal writing, observational notes on students, or videotaped lessons.

  Teacher: *Our keeping a journal going between us is really helpful. It makes me sit down and collect all the thoughts I have and put them together. And her comments in return are extremely helpful, too. It's reinforcing and encouraging and probing to get me to think about something again. Between the talking and the written communication it's been a fantastic way to get things straight. I've never been good at written records, so it's really taken a lot of discipline on my part to write the journal.*

- Organizing study groups of teachers who meet to discuss and reflect upon their work.

5. *Extending the services of a teachers' center to school buildings. (Frequently advisors are teachers' center staff members.)*

- Providing in-classroom advisory services as a direct follow-up to the workshop offerings of a local teachers' center.
- Establishing informal communication networks among teachers who have common interests or concerns.
- Conducting informal, personal needs assessments for a teachers' center.

  Advisor: *Nothing can replace regular, relaxed personal contact for garnering insight into people's needs—especially for convincing people that their needs are important, and if articulated can probably be met.*[19]

- Helping teachers collaborate in designing and giving workshops for each other.
- Gathering materials and equipment, consultants, and institutional support needed to sustain a teacher's plans for improvement or growth in new areas.
- Helping small groups of teachers document and analyze what is happening in their classrooms. Encouraging and enabling teachers to take time to write (and publish) about their work.
- Arranging release time so teachers can move outside the isolation of the classroom or department and contact other stimulating people and programs.
- Helping teachers translate current research findings and educational theory into everyday practice.
- Spotlighting exemplary teaching practices and helping other teachers adapt them according to their particular settings and needs.

Realistic Expectations of the Advisor Role: Dilemmas and Discouragements

Along with the satisfactions of advisory work come a set of dilemmas and discouragements. Advisors face complex, never ending decisions about how much, how often, and specifically what kind of support to offer. They face the task of learning quickly and retaining, for example, 25 teachers' understandings of children's learning, their particular teaching goals and skills, their curriculum plans and knowledge of their students. In addition, advisors usually work singly in schools where they must make independent, on-the-spot decisions that cannot be prescribed ahead of time.

Some advisors cite as their greatest disappointment the "fact of life" that no one person can have a meaningful impact on *all* the teachers in a school. Others find it difficult to keep patience with teachers who test the advisor's sincerity by casual or insignificant requests before the kind of mutual trust develops that can eventually lead to the heart of the teacher's concerns. Almost all advisors admit being downcast occasionally with the slow pace of their work with teachers. As Lilian Katz points out, there are no instant results when the long-term focus is on issues that grow out of teachers' lasting dispositions and already acquired competencies, and on providing moderate and steady (rather than gimmicky or overwhelming) kinds and amounts of inspiration.[11]

> Advisor: *When you "do for" someone a lot, it is hard to pull back, hard to catch the right moment for change, or to tolerate the temporary disappointment of the teacher, which are all part of any teacher/advisor relationship.*

Sometimes a teacher invites an advisor into the classroom but doesn't really want such close assistance. Another touchy situation arises from a request for supporting a willing teacher that is initiated by the principal rather than by the teacher. Such a situation raises questions about the advisor's possibly evaluating the teacher, or the teacher's being evaluated by the principal for successful implementation of the advisor's suggestions. Another perplexity is how to help teachers who lean heavily on the advisor feel more confident in their ability to solve their own problems.

> Advisor: *The teacher didn't even have a plan for grouping the kids. I am asked everything, everything. How long before I say, "Hey look, you've been teaching for ten years; trust yourself to make these decisions on your own."*

It is hard to work simultaneously with several teachers who are at different stages in their development.

> Advisor: *I used to wonder if we should have different advisors for different stages of teacher development. The "how to" beginning stage needs one sort of person, the later stage, where teachers need support towards more autonomous functioning, may need another kind of person. But I disagree with that now. I think advisors can do both with support from their advisees. Besides, there are certain principles on how you work with other people that apply to all the stages.*

There may be a conflict between what teachers are asking for and what the advisor would like to see them do.

> Advisor: *I made the mistake of putting together a workshop on how kids could study the local community in response to a request for livening up a school's social studies curriculum. I didn't hear clearly what the teachers and the principal were asking for, but offered something I was excited about instead. It was a big flop.*

Sometimes teachers want the advisor to show them "how to do it" but aren't willing to build on the suggestions and make them their own. There is disagreement among advisors about working with teachers by means of "modeling." Some advisors feel that working with children is what they do best, and so they do their best advising by providing a concrete example of ways of working with children.

> Advisor: *I am not giving a demonstration lesson, because I do not take the responsibility of the classroom away from the teacher. The "how-to" aspects are played down. The focus is on how particular children learn and respond rather than on how I am teaching. To be successful, the modeling must serve a clear need that we have discussed and agreed upon ahead of time. The ideas and theory behind what I'm doing are then examined in our follow-up conversations.*

On the other hand, there are advisors who choose not to model teaching behavior because they feel it is extremely important to avoid any possibility of teachers' feeling they are being shown the "right way."

> Advisor: *When you work with teachers and get involved in their process of change, you cannot take for granted that teachers will learn how to do something simply by seeing you do it. I don't think they do, with perhaps a few exceptions.*

Difficulties may arise out of an advisor's lack of preparation in a needed subject area.

> Advisor: *If you don't know anything about a topic, you cannot help a teacher with it any more than a teacher with limited materials and even more limited experience with materials can offer them to children. It is best to first learn a few things yourself and then learn along with the teacher. Only after this will you be ready to plan together for the children's learning.*

It is also difficult when the style and assumptions of the teacher and the advisor are very different, or when the teacher has a different perception of the advisor's purposes from what the advisor intends.

The strongest tension in the advisor's job is that between the intent to induce high quality classroom practice along with meaningful curriculum, and the commitment to strengthen initiative, individuality, and autonomy in the advisee. Knowing that his or her own beliefs and performance will be judged in great part by improvement in the advisee's teaching, still the advisor must let that develop in its own time, style, and shape. Keys to success are the advisor's own *values*, expressed with clarity and concreteness in the form of methods and materials, but with emphasis on the teacher transforming and adapting principles rather than copying methods. A protection against failure is the advisor's realistic judgment in discerning, after a fair tryout, those teachers who will not respond to this kind of teaching and then gracefully withdrawing from an unproductive relationship.

Finally, the job's complex demands of responsiveness, responsibility, and independence—supporting the teacher and challenging the teacher—are both daunting and attracting.

> Advisor: *An advisor moves within a setting, takes on various responsibilities—for me, mandated as well as voluntary—carries his or her own set of values, develops varied relationships, and much more. This doesn't happen in only one way. The very complexity is what makes the job distinctive and creative.*

Characteristics, Skills, and Experiences Advisory Work Requires

"Musts" for teachers who are being advised:

- Awareness of a need, lack, imbalance, or deep concern.
- Readiness and energy to take on new work and learning at this time.
- Long-term commitment to their own professional development.

The school setting must provide:

- Active support from the school district administration, especially the building principal.
- Respect for the teacher's prerogative to initiate the request for an advisor's help.
- A climate in which the teacher's efforts for professional growth will be accepted and supported by fellow teachers and parents.
- A realistic work load and flexible scheduling that allow the advisor to have regular, long-term contact with all the teachers being advised.

"Musts" for advisors:

- Extensive classroom teaching experience in several subject areas at the grade levels of the teachers they are advising. Understanding how successful classrooms work.
- Understanding of adults' and children's learning and a talent for relating theory to subject matter and daily happenings in a classroom. Appreciation for the unique abilities of each person. Awareness of the complexities involved in improving instruction.
- Confidence, leadership, and credibility in working with adults, including an unobtrusive, non-threatening style of interpersonal communication.
- Continuing involvement in their own learning—people whose example of intellectual curiosity, determination, and enthusiasm is contagious.
- Personal clarity and confidence in their own values and beliefs, and sincere respect for the integrity of others' beliefs and actions—even if they are quite different. The ability to see situations clearly.

Advisors should also be able to:

- Observe and to some extent analyze and document what is happening in a classroom; see the implicit meaning in actions and relationships.

- Recognize the survival needs of beginning teachers as well as the needs of experienced teachers to be renewed and stretched; understand how different individuals get their rewards and satisfactions.
- Make good matches among teachers with similar interests and concerns; develop a network of support among these teachers. Facilitate small group meetings, discussions, and workshops; plan and problem-solve with a group of teachers or the staff of a school. Help make resources (support personnel, materials, money) available to these groups.
- Work productively with a group of teachers over a long period of time and through several stages of development; work with patience toward long-range goals.
- Work comfortably and flexibly with teachers, administrators, and parents on school climate and parental support of their children's learning, without giving up their primary obligation to support teacher growth in areas defined by the teacher and at the teacher's own rate. Articulately describe and forcefully defend the advisor program to teacher groups, administrators, parents, community organizations, and businesses in order to gain support and understanding for advisory work.

Selection, Training, and Ongoing Development of Advisors

Selection

Experience in several advisory programs has shown that the most successful advisors are those whose natural way of working with colleagues is that of "helping teacher"; it is not a style they have to learn. They have already had years of experience working successfully with children. These advisors are:

> *teachers who have answered many first-level questions about development, learning, and teaching; people with a deep understanding of classrooms and excitement about their own learning.*

In most cases advisors need to have taught at the grade levels of the teachers they are advising. But being a successful, experienced teacher is only a first step. It is crucial that advisors be just as skillful and experienced in working with adults—teachers, administrators, and parents. Advisors should be individuals with strong, positive self-concepts who are confident and mature enough to deal effectively with issues of authority and to function flexibly within a job which is often a mire of overlapping responsibilities. An advisor who has had no previous experience working as an equal with administrators often has difficulty being an effective advocate for teachers. It is fairly easy to find advisors with sensitive one-to-one consultation skills, but harder to find those who also have the group process, public relations, and organizational skills they will need as they work to establish support groups among teachers and as they foster administrators' and parents' support of teacher growth.

In most places advisors have been " found" rather than "made" by locating people within the school district or university system who are already working with teachers in an advisory way and then freeing their time or shifting their responsibilities or position so they can function as non-evaluative, voluntarily sought-out advisors. One teacher said,

> *I feel this is the chance of a lifetime for me to get my teaching together. I need a real expert to work with on it. If a salary is going to be spent, it should go for someone who knows what she's doing.*

It is an advantage if advisors themselves have had the experience of advisor-type relationships when they were student teaching, participating at a teachers' center, developing curriculum, working as a graduate student, or planning intensively with another teacher over a long period of time.

Advisors may be identified by their fellow teachers and principals. Usually it is advantageous to hire "insiders" who already have credibility with local teachers and administrators rather than outside consultants who must spend several years proving themselves. When asked about the qualities an advisor needs, teachers who were being advised responded:

> *Someone who talks about teachers as "evolvers" and with respect, not as people who need to change; as friends and colleagues, not as people who need an injection of something the advisor is supposed to give them.*
>
> *Someone with lots of classroom experience who can verbalize a variety of ideas in a practical way to different kinds of teachers.*
>
> *Someone who is sociable, who can talk easily with people and make people comfortable, who's not in a hurry, who's compassionate and enthusiastic.*

Someone who can use both intellect and feelings in the work. Someone who handles conflict and confrontation well.

Not someone whose primary satisfaction is in helping a group of people all accomplish something she values, but rather one who delights in helping others seek out their individual interests and who supports their taking on difficult tasks.

Training

Advisors usually bring to their jobs a background of experience in working collaboratively with teachers. Curriculum development projects such as the Elementary Science Study encouraged advisory-type relationships between project staff and classroom teachers who were actively involved in both design and testing of the units. Resource teachers who work with children with special learning needs may have spent many years discussing children's learning with classroom teachers. Specialists who work with groups of children in the classroom instead of in "pull-out programs" have also had experience observing and then discussing with teachers aspects of their teaching and the classroom environment. Inservice coordinators or curriculum specialists who have helped teachers pursue their own experiential learning are well prepared to support teachers' exploration in new curriculum areas. Every school district has several "master teachers" who in one capacity or another have been working collaboratively with other teachers while continuing to teach. Classroom teachers who have participated in teachers' center programs have gained many communication skills and the experience in "networking" that advisors need. At the Mountain View Center for Environmental Education a project helped three experienced classroom teachers work one day a week as intern advisors.[12] Nine teachers serve as advisors two afternoons a month to teachers from Waxahachie, Texas' seven elementary and middle schools at the district's Advisory Center for Teachers. University staffs who have worked intensively with student teachers will also have many advising skills, although they may never have heard of the term, but unless their program also served the students' master teachers, their experience may be limited to the needs of beginning teachers.

At the Workshop Center for Open Education, City College of New York, beginning advisors have had the experience of apprenticing with or "shadowing" an experienced advisor. This provided them the opportunity to observe and work alongside the experienced advisor in classrooms, to get immediate feedback on their own beginning work from both the classroom teacher and the experienced advisor, and to sit in on teachers' group meetings and conferences with parents and/or administrators. Sometimes these apprentice advisors work part-time until they gain experience and confidence. An advisor's work will be greatly enhanced if he or she is simultaneously able to take on a self-chosen area of study to pursue in depth, and join a support group of experienced advisors and teachers. Such a group's weekly meetings give novices access to practical expertise and, equally important, are forums for discussion of the best research and thinking in the area of supporting human learning.[13]

Several universities offer graduate training for educators who want to study and gain experience in advising or related work. The first two programs listed below offer formal advisor training; the others provide excellent and less formal preparation for advisory work. Information on these programs is available through the following sources:

- Lillian Weber and James Neujahr. Workshop Center for Open Education, Room 6, Shepard Hall, City College of New York, 140th Street at Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031. (212) 368-1619 or 690-4162. A post-master's program that leads to New York State Certification in Administration and Supervision.
- Mason Bunker and Masha Rudman. Integrated Day Program, Division for Instructional Leadership, School of Education, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA 01003. (413) 545-3121 and 545-0246. Most training of advisors done in doctoral program.

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The Teachers' Centers Exchange, located at the Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, California 94103 (415—565-3095), is supported by the National Institute of Education.

- Theodore Manolakes, Bernard Spodek, and Lilian Katz. College of Education, University of Illinois, Urbana, IL 61901. (217) 333-2560. Inservice teachers, curriculum coordinators, or district supervisors, for example, work out areas of study with College of Education faculty. Advanced degrees offered.
- Vito Perrone. Center for Teaching and Learning, Box 8158, Education Building, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202. (701) 777-2674. Preparing people to assist teachers in curriculum development and classroom practice.
- Vincent Rogers, Box U-32, School of Education, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06268. (203) 486-3321. Flexible internships for students interested in advising or related work.
- George Hein and Brenda Engel. Program Evaluation and Research Group, Lesley College, 29 Everett Street, Cambridge, MA 02238. (617) 868-9600. Training in qualitative evaluation and research within or outside of the degree program.
- Patricia Carini and Carol Lecky. Prospect Archive and Center for Education and Research, North Bennington, VT 05257. (802) 442-8134. Independent M.A. and post-M.A. program. Advisor-type training done in Program for Experienced Professionals and in Summer Institute. Some stipends available.

Ongoing Development

It is deadly for advisors to work in isolation. They need to reflect together and study the art and science of teaching; to share ideas, observations, and feelings about their work; and to support each other and celebrate what they do. In some programs advisors meet regularly to discuss their approaches to teachers, children, curriculum, administrators, parents, and so forth.

> Advisor: *Unless one has some depth, one can't make connections. All too often we encourage surface "flitting" instead of intellectual depth.... Most leadership takes time to reflect—to get away from it all—hibernate, in order to gather intellectual vigor and integrity. Teachers need advisory support because they give to children all the time, and it is draining, and so they need my input. We must all feed our own deep inner well of energy and ideas. I get the support I need as an advisor—intellectual and emotional—at our teachers' center.*

Other advisors use courses, especially summer institutes, or "hibernation sabbaticals" to satisfy this need, because they find it unrealistic to plan regular time for study and reflection during the school year.

The habit of writing a journal greatly helps the process of reflection, consolidation, and confidence building. The habit of exploration of a new skill or topic—actively learning by direct experience—also supports integration of experience and knowledge. All educators need frequent confrontations with experts—people of vision—whether through reading, taking courses, or mutual discussions. Most advisors are engaged in a life-long study of human development, learning theories, and various curriculum areas, but they also may need to investigate the literature on social and psychological change, on the school as a political and social system, and on "helping relationships." One or more of these kinds of study will help an advisor to understand the processes and gain the facilitating skills which will enable a school, or teachers in a particular school system, to become a self-renewing community that will continue to grow, independent of the advisor's care and presence.

> Advisor: *Through some strict budgeting and the explanation of this need, we managed to save Fridays for all-day advisor sessions. We did all kinds of things in these sessions. We had seminars on language. We had meetings with our principals. We had meetings with the custodians in our schools. The teachers who helped initiate change needed workshops where they could further explore issues, and so we had meetings with teachers and paraprofessionals. We found we had to expand, and we moved to Greenwich, Connecticut for weekend conferences with people working in Open Corridors, where we could do some of the things that would make us a community of friends: swimming, singing, watching a film, reading, and then doing some serious work in a particular area that was important in the daily life of the schools.*[14]

Advisors need a reasonable workload, one which does not push them, as too many curric-

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ulum specialists and resource teachers have been pushed, into simply dropping off materials and hoping teachers will make good use of them. Advisory work requires regular, persistent, long-term scheduling, and recognition that modest, continuous gains bring about lasting, sound improvement. Advisors need the active support of building principals and protection from being used as clerks, vice-principals, or substitute teachers. They need an opportunity to develop depth in one area, and time and encouragement to reflect about and document their work so they will develop intellectual vigor and integrity. Because advising is complex and draining, advisors need, in addition to an ongoing support group, regular renewing experiences which feed *them*—for example, working with children or exploring a new topic for their own interest and learning.

Relationship of Advisory Work to Teachers' Centers

Teachers' centers have set forth a staff development program that treats teachers the way it is hoped teachers will treat students. A center works to strengthen the power of individuals as decision makers, to connect theory with practice, to help teachers identify and use multifarious resources, and to heighten teachers' self-awareness and articulation of their values and needs. Because the purposes and methods of advisory work are directly parallel to these, advisors are a natural concomitant of a teachers' center. The most effective advisors usually work out of a teachers' center, using its services and program to extend and support their work with teachers. Simultaneously, the advisor is a mainstay and enricher of the center's work—taking its services directly to individual teachers in schools or to the entire staff of a school in a way that is consistent with the center's values and policies. Advisors enable the center to offer in-school, practical help that teachers want and to support them in taking on projects which improve their teaching practice. Advisory service will convince teachers jaundiced by the impersonality of large-scale inservice programs that the teachers' center offers a different kind of staff development—even, steady support rather than one-shot ideas or crisis intervention.

The presence of an advisor on a center's staff ensures that its services will grow out of first-hand experience with the actual needs and conditions of teachers and students. The advisor's follow-up help during or after a course or series of workshops greatly increases the likelihood that the program will result in improved student learning and school experiences.

> Teacher: *Sometimes it's really hard to transfer what I gain up at [the center] into the practical situation of the classroom on a day-to-day basis. It has been really helpful having [an advisor] come into the room... It's one thing for me to learn something but another thing for me to find ways to set it up and get it going, to introduce and work with it so it's meaningful for the kids... to bring it down to their level.*[15]

Because it attacks stress and low morale directly, advisory work has helped teachers deal with stressful conditions in constructive ways and thus helps guard against "teacher burnout."

Advisors can bring into the life of the center the ancillary staff that work alongside them in schools—principals, paraprofessionals, special education teachers, reading and math resource teachers, counselors, and community liaison workers. Conversely, the presence and example of in-school advisory work enables the center to influence resource teachers and support staff to use a more teachers' center/advisor-like approach in their work with classroom teachers.

Teachers who have worked successfully with advisors to improve their teaching and establish supportive networks within their school eventually develop a need to give to others, to reach out beyond the confines of their classroom or school base to share their discoveries. A center can provide these experienced teachers with a place and a program through which they can satisfy these needs—to develop talents of working with adults as well as students, and to connect their career advancement directly to their continuing work for improved performance in their jobs without having to leave classroom teaching. It is often teachers like these who become a center's strongest supporters.

Advisors are realistic about some teachers' inadequacies, whether these result from inappropriate training, low standards for their own and student's work, lack of perceptive diagnosis of students' knowledge and needs or (especially when teachers are under constant stress) little motivation to improve. Advisors are optimistic about the positive effects that advisory outreach can have with teachers during periods when they would not seek out a center's support on their own. Adelaide Sproul, describing her work with Boston public school teachers during an especially difficult period, wrote:

For several years the Boston papers have been zealously reporting integration troubles in the city. There has been much handwringing about low reading scores, but very little is said about the teachers who work in these schools. Hard working and with few exceptions conscientious, not always especially gifted and often badly trained, these are sincere people who care about children and who are trying to do a good job—"the run of the mine teacher." It is these people I have come to respect and to count on as I work in schools, and they are the ones in the long run who will point the schools toward excellence.... The gains [these teachers have made] are very modest, and it is this that makes them sound.... There is another important factor—the changes come from the teachers' own experience, not from a set of imposed guidelines.... The real work which gets real results is only accomplished by quiet, persistent effort that stays on schedule. Over a stretch of several years this kind of commitment is more fruitful than any number of quick attempts.[16]

During the dozen years of teachers' center history in the U.S., many centers have offered advisory services. In his description of the work of Project RISE, a center serving nine rural towns in east-central Connecticut, Peter Martin writes:

[Advisors] are key people in fostering a continual on-the-spot kind of needs assessment, as well as serving as needs-fulfillers in an informal, non-evaluative manner. I believe our consultant/advisors are essential to the success of our total support system. These are the people who help build egos. They help ensure that large-group workshops grow from real needs, and that the workshops are followed by personalized in-classroom assistance when needed. Working with principals, the consultant/advisors will also foster buddy-system approaches, set up work groups, curriculum study groups, and other in-school growth activities. They conduct mini-workshops in their areas of expertise and encourage other staff members to do likewise.[17]

Even centers with only one or two staff positions schedule some time each week for advising, and manage to weave it into all their special programs. At Teacher Center Brookline, Massachusetts, advisory services are part of the Democratic Classroom Practice Study funded by the Danforth Foundation. A portion of the director's salary of the Oakland, California, Teacher Shelter was paid by an early childhood program in return for her advisory services in teachers' classrooms one morning each week. The Workshop Center for Open Education grew out of the Advisory to Open Corridors, which has enabled more than 40 advisors to work in New York City public schools during the last ten years. WCOE provides an excellent example of a site that carries out the mature stages of advisory work in which experienced "advisees" are major resources for center newcomers and are central contributors to the center's governance program and development. The Charlotte, North Carolina, Teaching/Learning Center had several advisors on its staff during its first two years. They are now offering advisory support to the 72 coordinating teachers for curriculum and instruction assigned to each junior high and one or two elementary schools.

Advisors have also worked in high schools. For example, as part of the Teacher Corps Project, a team of advisors worked for three years in South High School, Worcester, Massachusetts. One WCOE advisor "moved up" with elementary school students and their parents, making the transition from elementary level Open Corridor programs to advising their junior high teachers. Although the Philadelphia Advisory Center has closed due to lack of funds, there is still an active network of teachers who were originally brought together by the center's advisors. The experience of this center offers proof that in its later stages, advisory work can result in self-sustaining group efforts.

Advisors, in turn, need teachers' centers. Where there is a center and staff to program and absorb the later, out-of-classroom stages of advisory work, advisors are able to serve many more people. Where a center can provide workshops and materials that are the natural outgrowths of the teacher/advisor discussions, advisory work is immeasurably more effective. The center also serves as a place which supports the advisor's own learning and renewal:

Advisor: *When I reach the point where I've had it, I am able to say so and step back and work with some materials and with my own learning until I'm turned on and able to go back to working in the schools. The center is a place where you are trusted to grow in the way you need and to do your job in the way that's best for you. There is great freedom and support in this.*

Advisory work is in no way a frill. The biggest budget item for a center is its staff, because teachers place most value in the center's human resources. Unless the encounter with

the "teacher of teachers" is satisfying and substantially better than the classoom teacher's previous inservice experiences, the fact that a center provides a welcoming place and practical program will not be enough to make it valued over time. Those responsible for governing teachers' centers need to find ways to hire advisors, and thus extend the philosophy and services of the center into direct support of teachers and staff at their school sites. At the same time teachers' center staff need to look seriously at their own relationships with teachers, and incorporate the spirit and skills of advising into their daily meetings at the center. If new staff coming into a center understand that to work at a teachers' center is quite a different job—one based on a different view of adult learning and offering a different kind of attitude and services than most traditional staff development programs—it will be natural for them to function in an advisory way.

And what are the benefits to a center of having advisors on its staff? It keeps the staff honest. They don't fall into bureaucratic ways because they don't lose touch with classroom realities. They are able to observe directly the effects of the center's work—bad as well as good. Advisory service helps the center live up to its purpose of matching its program offerings to teachers' actual needs and competencies. It provides a way of reaching directly those teachers who would not come to the center on their own. And in the long run advisory work assures that in time the center will have the strong support and leadership of a group of dedicated teachers—self-propelled learners who use their own energy to work on projects they have initiated.

Notes

[1]Frances Pockman Hawkins, "The Eye of the Beholder," in *Special Education and Development*, ed. Samuel J. Meisels (Baltimore: University Park Press, 1979), p. 12. Reprinted in *Outlook*, Issue No. 32, Summer 1979 (Boulder, CO: Mountain View Publishing Company), pp. 10-33.

[2]Participants at Boulder Workparty: Mountain View Center: David Hawkins, Ronald Colton, Charles Mena, Jane Richtmyer, Joyce Colton, Barry Kluger, Maja Apelman, Kathy Woodward, Yvonne Mayers, Barbara Seckinger, Cate Applegate, Betty Botts, Jean Jacobson; Nicki Steel, Mountain Towns' Teacher Center, Wilmington, VT; Celia Houghton, Goddard College, Plainfield, VT; Adelaide Sproul, Greater Boston Teachers Center, Cambridge; Edith Klausner, Advisory Center for the Improvement of Education, Philadelphia; Mary Brown, Fordham/District 3 Learning Center, New York City; Blossom Gelernter, District 2 Teacher Center, New York City; Lillian Weber, Theodora Polito, James Nenjahr, Workshop Center for Open Education, New York City; Deane Crowell, Carol Newman, Teaching/Learning Center, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, Charlotte, NC; Lou Bradley, Yadkin County Schools, Yadkinville, NC; Mary Oberg, West Area Interdisciplinary Team, Minneapolis Public Schools; Sharon Feiman Nemser, Nancy Peters, Department of Education, University of Chicago; David Messerschmidt, Susan Carpenter, Teacher Curriculum Work Center, Chicago; Daniel Scheinfeld, Nettelhorst Project, Nettelhorst School, Chicago; Dianne Sautter, Education Resource Center, Chicago; Theodore Manolakes, College of Education, University of Illinois, Urbana; Penelope Buchanan, Greater Cleveland Teacher Center, Cleveland Heights, OH; Patricia Zigarmi, Oxford, OH; Robert Mai, Educational Confederation, St. Louis; Linda Welles, Webster College, St. Louis; Gail Johnston, Ron Gager, Learning Exchange, Kansas City; Dick Baxter, Lake County Intermediate Education District, Lakeview, OR; Bob Anderson, School of Education, University of Portland; Mary Collins, Cherry Valley School, Petaluma, CA; Amity Buxton, Teacher Shelter, Oakland Public Schools, Oakland, CA; Bill Baker, Alameda County Schools, Hayward, CA; Deborah Baldwin, Center for New Schools, Chicago; Linda Balkin, Urban Gateways, Chicago.

[3]Maja Apelman, "A Permanently Tentative Curriculum," in *Breakaway to Multidimensional Approaches: Integrating Curriculum Development and Inservice Education*, ed. Roy A. Edelfelt and E. Brooks Smith (Washington, DC: Association of Teacher Educators, 1978), pp. 26 and 28.

[4]The advisor role has been described in detail by advisors and other educational writers, many of whom are cited in this paper. Other quotations throughout this paper not attributed by name are from unpublished writings of participants at the September 1977 Boulder Workparty on advisory work. Those 45 participants also contributed many of the principles of advising described in this paper.

[5]Christine San Jose, "Staffing a Teachers' Center," in *Building a Teachers' Center*, ed. Kathleen Devaney (San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1979), p. 49. "Staffing a Teachers' Center" is also available separately as Occasional Paper 4, Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development.

[6]Quoted by Barbara Seckinger, "A Look at the First Year: Experienced Teachers as Advisors to Their Colleagues" (Boulder, CO: Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, 1977), p. 23.

[7]Maja Apelman, "An Advisor at Work," in *Building a Teachers' Center*, ed., Kathleen Devaney (San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1979), p. 164.

[8]For descriptions of teachers' study groups see Kathe Jervis, "Teachers Learning from Teachers," *Learning*, Vol. 7, No. 1, August/September 1978, pp. 68-74; also, write Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103 and ask for a free copy of "Philadelphia Workparty Proceedings: Study Groups."

[9]Quoted by Barbara Seckinger, "A Look at the First Year: Experienced Teachers as Advisors to Their Colleagues" (Boulder, CO: Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, 1977), p. 24.

[10]Christine San Jose, "Staffing a Teachers' Center," in *Building a Teachers' Center*, ed. Kathleen Devaney (San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1979), p. 47.

[11]Lilian G. Katz, "Helping Others Learn to Teach" (Urbana: ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, 1979). Katz discusses these issues in depth, pp. 1-14.

[12]Barbara Seckinger, "A Look at the First Year: Experienced Teachers as Advisors to Their Colleagues" (Boulder, CO: Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, 1977).

[13]A detailed description of WCOE's experience is available in Beth Alberty and Ruth Dropkin, *The Open Education Advisor* (New York: Workshop Center for Open Education, City College of New York, 1975).

[14]Georgia Delano, "Developing Teacher Centers," in *Changing Schools: Open Corridors and Teacher Center*, ed. Ruth Dropkin (New York: Workshop Center for Open Education, City College of New York, 1978), p. 38.

[15]Quoted by Barbara Seckinger, "A Look at the First Year: Experienced Teachers as Advisors to Their Colleagues" (Boulder, CO: Mountain View Center for Environmental Education, 1977), p 22.

[16]Adelaide Sproul, "Selections from an Advisor's Notebook," in *Essays on Teachers' Centers*, ed. Kathleen Devaney (San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1977), pp. 119 and 120.

[17]Peter Martin, "A Teachers' Center for Nine Rural Towns," Occasional Paper No. 2 (San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, December 1977), pp. 3-4.

Recommendations for Further Reading About the Advisor Role

The selection and annotations are by Sharon Feiman Nemser and Kathleen Devaney.

Alberty, Beth, and Dropkin, Ruth. *The Open Education Advisor.* New York: Workshop Center for Open Education, 1975. 92 pp. $3.50. Order from Publications, Workshop Center for Open Education, 6 Shepard Hall, City College of New York, 140th Street and Convent Avenue, New York, NY 10031.

The work life of an advisor is described in this booklet compiled from interviews with advisors and selections from their journals. Although these advisors were associated with a project assisting teachers to improve their open classrooms, the principles of advisory work are applicable to teachers in all kinds of classrooms. This book clearly illustrates both the principles and practice of advising. It contains a running commentary by Lillian Weber, director of Open Corridors in District 3, New York City, and of the Workshop Center for Open Education at City College of New York.

Apelman, Maja. "An Advisor at Work." In *Building a Teachers' Center*, Kathleen Devaney, ed. San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1979. 292 pp. $9.70. Order from Teachers College Press, 1234 Amsterdam Avenue, New York, NY 10027.

The Mountain View Center for Environmental Education in Boulder, Colorado, offers two types of advisors to work with teachers: generalists who draw on their classroom experience and specialists whose contributions come mainly from subject matter expertise. In this essay, Apelman describes how she, as a generalist advisor, helped a teacher build curriculum around an event in the immediate school environment—the paving of a road outside the school—and how she also involved subject matter specialists. Apelman urges teachers (and teachers' centers) to go outside the educational community when looking for help with specific subject matter. This is one way to overcome the isolation of teachers from the community at large and of school children from what they view as their real world.

Apelman, Maja, et al. *Teacher Centers and Advisory Work: A Panel Discussion.* Washington, DC: Teacher Center Project, National Foundation

for the Improvement of Education, National Education Association, 1978. 26 pp. Single copies free. Order from National Education Association Instruction and Professional Development, Room 709, 1201 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

The discussion transcribed in this booklet was part of a workshop held in Boulder, Colorado, at the Mountain View Center for Environmental Education and sponsored by the Teacher Center Project of the National Education Association. Moderated by Maja Apelman, the panel included five teachers who talk about how and why they got involved with the center; what their initial feelings were about having an advisor in their classroom; how their relationship with the center and its staff evolved; and what effects the center has had on their outlook and practice. Apelman notes that work in the schools and work at the center are interdependent—for herself as well as for the teachers she assists. Her comments range over such topics as the problems which come up in advising, the qualifications of an advisor, how an advisory relationship is initiated, and the importance of administrative support.

Bussis, Anne; Chittenden, Edward; and Amarel, Marianne. *Beyond Surface Curriculum: An Interview Study of Teachers' Understandings.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1976. 194 pp. $16.50. Order from Westview Press, 1898 Flatiron Court, Boulder, CO 80301.

In spring 1972, the authors conducted in-depth interviews with 60 elementary school teachers attempting to implement more open or informal approaches to instruction. The interviews focused on the teachers' beliefs about children, curriculum, and their working environment. Of the 60 teachers, 46 were participating in some form of advisory programs.

One section of the interview study focused specifically on teachers' perceptions of advisory support. Teachers' responses were coded in two ways: (1) according to the type of activity which the teacher perceived the advisor to be engaged in; (2) according to the degree of "supportiveness" experienced by the teacher. Thirteen categories of support were identified. They represent a progression from a consumer or "taking in" orientation on the teacher's part to a more active stance involving personal investment, critical judgment, conceptual reorganization. One major finding of the study which underscores the subtle difficulty of advising is that individual teachers construe the same advising activity in vastly different ways.

Churchill, Edith H.E., and Petner, Joseph. *Children's Language and Thinking: A Report of Work-in-Progress,* Grand Forks: North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of North Dakota, 1977. 60 pp. $2.50. Order from North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation, Box 8158, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202.

This report describes in-school advisors taping vignettes of children's classroom conversations and giving the typed transcripts to teachers taking part in a semester-long inservice course. The transcripts are used as the raw material for staff discussions which focus on the individual teachers' classrooms—individual children's developmental levels, learning styles, strengths, interests, and implications for the curriculum.

This monograph and a report written by Churchill and Richard C. Carter about a similar project at Hanscom School (Lincoln, MA) provide a model which teachers' centers or advisors could use in designing "Children's Conversation Workshops," as intensive and challenging staff development experiences for a group of teachers in a school. The goal of such workshops, like that of all advising, is to stimulate teachers' thinking about teaching in general, not simply particular problems. The Churchill-Carter report about Hanscom School is available from the Teachers' Centers Exchange.

Cook, Ann, and Mack, Herb. *The Word and the Thing: Ways of Seeing the Teacher.* Grand Forks: North Dakota Study Group on Evaluation, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of North Dakota, 1975. 23 pp. Out of print. Available on loan from the Teachers' Centers Exchange.

This monograph is written by the directors of the Community Resources Institute, an early teachers' center in New York City which provided advisory services to teachers in their classrooms. Looking back on what they have learned, the authors comment that advisors need to challenge and stimulate as well as support teachers—advisors need to facilitate a teacher's "growth and introspection over a long period of time," as well as offer simple "how-to" help. In chapters on "The Teacher as Planner" and "The Teacher as Researcher," Cook and Mack emphasize the need for the advisor to teach teachers to observe, record, and analyze pupils' classroom actions and products.

> *From the outset, advisors must believe the people with whom they work are capable of standing on their own feet and of relying on their own judgment; they must convey these feelings to those receiving support. To foster confidence and independent judgment, an advisor must value these goals and find ways to achieve them.*

Devaney, Kathleen. "A New Resource—The Advisor," pp. 71-99. In *Developing Open Education in America: A Review of Theory and Practice in the*

Public Schools. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 1974. 191 pp. $2.20 prepaid. Order from National Association for the Education of Young Children, Publications Department, 1834 Connecticut Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20009.

Kathleen Devaney notes some similarities between the advisor and the positions of curriculum coordinator or supervisor, but she emphasizes two crucial differences:

> *The advisor's objective is to "look for growing points" from which to develop the teacher's professional skill rather than to evaluate the teacher, and the advisor's activities are the actual teaching of teachers and children rather than administering official policies and installing officially adopted programs.*

Devaney characterizes a general pattern of advisory work and highlights the unique features of several American advisory services.

Feiman, Sharon, and Floden, Robert. "What's All This Talk About Teacher Development?" Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, 1979. Copies available from the Institute for Research on Teaching, Erickson Hall, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Current inservice rhetoric favors a developmental point of view and there is growing interest in this among researchers. Still, different people mean different things by the phrase "teacher development" and seem unaware of alternative formulations. This paper samples the "developmental" literature in teacher education to illustrate different uses of the concept.

The material, which includes reports of research and descriptions of practice, is organized into three categories. The first includes efforts to construct a theory of teacher development, of which Frances Fuller's theory of teacher concerns is one example. The second category consists of efforts to apply existing developmental theories. These efforts take two forms: (1) research using developmental theories (Kohlberg, Piaget, Loevinger) to explain individual differences among teachers; (2) efforts to translate developmental constructs into teacher education curriculum. The examples come from work at the Department of Psychoeducational Studies at the University of Minnesota. The third category contains descriptions of teacher education practices and efforts to justify them in developmental terms. Advisory work provides the major illustration.

Katz, Lilian G. "The Advisory Approach to Inservice Training," pp. 154-59. *Journal of Teacher Education.* Vol. XXV, No. 2, Summer 1974. Single Copies of the *Journal,* $3.00 prepaid. Order from Order Department, *Journal of Teacher Education,* AACTE, One Dupont Circle, Suite 610, Washington, DC 20036.

In this pilot study, advisors kept extensive field notes of their experiences in seven rural and urban schools in central Illinois. The following activities were cited most often:

1. providing materials to meet specific instructional needs;
2. helping teachers plan more effective room arrangements, learning centers, and so forth;
3. supporting teachers when they experienced setbacks or difficulties;
4. relating information about successful practices among teachers;
5. observing classroom activity and providing feedback;
6. demonstrating techniques and methods.

Two types of role conflicts emerged. The first concerned the problem of establishing credibility while assuming a non-directive, "anti-information-providing" posture. The second arose out of ideological conflicts between teachers and the advisor. In general, teachers were appreciative of advisory support. The most persistent problems resulted from constraints on teachers' time. Katz comments: "[Teachers] often ended their working day too exhausted to worry about alternative methods, philosophies or even individual children."

Katz, Lilian G. *Helping Others Learn to Teach.* Urbana; ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, 1979. 29 pp. $2.00. Order from ERIC Clearinghouse on Early Childhood Education, University of Illinois, 805 West Pennsylvania Avenue, Urbana, IL 61801.

Written for inservice specialists working with early childhood teachers, this small manual would be invaluable to advisors working with all kinds of teachers. Katz offers "Principles for the Selection of Focus"—choosing what to work on with teachers—and "General Techniques for Working with Teachers." Among the principles are "focus on the teacher's understandings of her own situation," on "competencies already acquired," on "strengthening worthwhile dispositions," and on "providing moderate amounts of inspiration." Katz' recommended techniques include "cultivate the habit of suspending judgment on what you observe"; "phrase suggestions in experimental form"; "help the teacher to re-define her job so that it is achievable"; and "use demonstration of skills

cautiously." She concludes with several assumptions about this kind of inservice work, among them:

> *. . . every teacher we work with has her own inner concerns and dreams and wishes and fantasies and hopes and associations, and so forth, just like all of us. We do not have to know the content of that life. It is not our business. But if we respect the fact that it is there, we are more likely to treat the teacher with dignity and with respect. . . .*

Mai, Robert. "Advisors and Staff Development." *The Developer*, National Staff Development Council, August 1978. 4 pp. Order from Patricia Zigarmi, 206 Oakhill Drive, Oxford, OH 45056.

Bob Mai briefly characterizes the state of the art of advising and suggests strategies for building advisors into the staff development structure of the public schools. Four features distinguish advisory work: (1) advisors offer assistance only when requested; (2) assistance is responsive to the teacher's goals and needs; (3) assistance is offered on site; (4) assistance is offered in ways that increase teachers' independence. The latter places some responsibility on the advisor to take the initiative in terminating the relationship. Working with four or five schools on a weekly or biweekly basis over an extended period of time (one to two years) appears to be a good way to deploy advisors. School systems may be able to capitalize on the staff development requirements of various federal programs (mainstreaming, desegregation) to "start-up" an advisory capacity.

Mai, Robert. "Inservice in the Classroom: The Advisory Approach," pp. 123-130. In *Essays on Teachers' Centers*, Kathleen Devaney, ed. San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1977. 199 pp. $10.00. Order from Order Department, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

This article is a description of the Educational Confederation's Developmental Learning Program in St. Louis public schools. The program began in 1974 with one advisor working in four inner-city schools, leading after-school workshops for teachers and principal and providing follow-up advisory support in the classroom. In 1975 four more schools joined the program and a second advisor was hired. The program was not oriented toward open classrooms and there was a deliberate effort to assure teachers that the advisor was at their disposal and had no personal agenda regarding how they ran their classrooms. The underlying assumption of the project was "if teachers who wish to grow professionally can have their needs met *on the job*, they will be more likely to try out new approaches and venture beyond old routines." The essay offers a brief description of how the advisors worked, indicating how varying situations called for different advisory approaches. Mai emphasizes two priorities in advisory work—patience and time. "The advisory approach to inservice must be non-threatening, intimate and sustained."

Manolakes, Theodore. "The Advisory System and Supervision." pp. 103-11. In *Essays on Teachers' Centers*, ed. Kathleen Devaney. San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1977. 199 pp. $10.00. Order from Order Department, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

This essay begins by differentiating advising from old style supervision. The advisory view places the individual teacher in control of help to be received and assumes that he or she will use those elements of a support system that are most beneficial. Noting that advising has its origins in informal education, Manolakes believes it can be readily adapted to other approaches. He identifies and elaborates several basic advisory functions: (1) Seed Planter and Extender; (2) Technical Helper; (3) Personal Support Person; (4) Expediter; (5) Informant and Communication Stimulator. While advising is a form of professional support, it is fundamentally an educational undertaking.

> *It may well be that stimulating and extending the thinking of teachers about ways of improving their work is at the heart of positive advisory functioning. Without mature goals and a willingness to engage the teacher in thinking about next steps, the work of the advisor is one of blind technical engineering, and can be an aimless activity.*

Ideally a total advisory system has two complementary elements: individuals (advisors) who can work with teachers in classrooms and a facility (teachers' center) where teachers can come for a variety of services.

Mitchell, Lucy Sprague. *Our Children, Our Schools.* New York: Simon and Schuster, 1950. 510 pp. Out of print.

The history of advising in the U.S. builds upon earlier work done in public education. This book documents an inservice experiment, the Bank Street workshops carried out in three New York public schools in the 1940s. The Board of Education had been revising the elementary curricula in the direction of more active learning through direct experience, and Bank Street College was asked to assist teachers in implementing the new curricula.

Two formats associated today with advising were used—work with individual teachers in their classrooms on any problem connected with curriculum or children, and weekly after-school meetings with the whole group or with teachers divided by grade groupings. The goal of the workshop was "to further teachers' growth toward professional maturity." The staff conceived their job on two levels: "to work with teachers on the basic relationships underlying curriculum thinking while working with them on the new teaching techniques around which their anxieties centered."

This book (including the appendices) is a gold mine of practical suggestions and insights for advisors and teachers. Unfortunately, it is out of print and difficult to locate. Try the shelves of your recently retired educator friends.

Sarason, Seymour B. *The Creation of Settings and the Future Societies.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1972. 295 pp. $13.95. Order from Jossey-Bass, Inc., 433 California Street, San Francisco, CA 94104.

Sarason probes topics such as the need to confront the historical context from which a new enterprise arises, leadership, the formation of the core group, the inevitability of working with insufficient resources, and the necessity of valuing the staff's personal growth as the new organization's prime resource.

> *The factor which is ignored or deemphasized in the creation of a setting, specifically in the formation of the core group, consists of two ingredients: the professional and personal growth and change of its members, and the ways in which their mutuality can enhance this growth and change . . . .*

Sarason contends that the routinization, boredom, and demoralization he observed in long-tenured public school teachers is caused by the fallacy of conceiving of schools exclusively in terms of children's learning. Teachers can't be expected to maintain attitudes of challenge and high aspiration in school settings which provide no *adult* intellectual stimulation and demands.

Sergiovanni, Thomas J., ed. *Professional Supervision for Professional Teachers.* Washington, DC: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1975. 79 pp. $4.50 prepaid. Stock number 611-75046. Order from Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1701 K Street NW, Suite 1100, Washington, DC 20006.

Essays by Sergiovanni and University of Illinois colleagues Louis J. Rubin, Theodore Manolakes, and Ernest R. House. Rubin's "The Case for Staff Development" is an argument for building a "professional growth system" on four cornerstones: "the teacher's sense of purpose, the teacher's perception of children, the teacher's knowledge of subject, the teacher's mastery of technique." House's "Beyond Accountability" reviews educators' unhappy experience with "simplistic," "neo-scientific," and business management-derived measures of teachers' performance. Sergiovanni's own contribution to this collection is called "Human Resources Supervision." It reviews and interprets employee motivation research in industry and in education, finding that "good feelings associated with *responsibility* lasted more than three times as long as achievement and recognition," which, in turn, are more powerful motivators than wages and working conditions. Sergiovanni recommends that supervisors of teachers try to increase teachers' responsibility -- "ownership and influence" in the classroom; however, he cautions that attempts to do this will fail without clear understanding and agreement on values and without the supervisor's personal investment and help.

Sproul, Adelaide. "Selections from an Advisor's Notebook." pp. 113-121. In *Essays on Teachers' Centers,* Kathleen Devaney, ed. San Francisco: Teachers' Centers Exchange, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1977. $10.00. Order from Order Department, Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1855 Folsom Street, San Francisco, CA 94103.

According to Adelaide Sproul, advisory work "is meant to give teachers the same care and understanding we want for children, non-judgmental support for what is often a lonely task." What comes across in these brief selections is her delight in bringing some adventure and excitement into the dailiness of teaching. Glimpses of work in urban and suburban schools in and around Boston highlight dramatic differences and less dramatic similarities. Despite the violence and uncertainty surrounding the inner-city school where Sproul worked on a weekly basis, there was real progress by the end of the second year—more child-centered classrooms, a calmer school, a strong and supportive group of teachers. Work in suburban schools brought initial success more easily. By the end of the second year, however, the two or three primary teachers working toward change in each of five schools felt isolated as administrators withdrew support. Nevertheless, they carried on. Looking back, Sproul wonders if she worked in vain—one school closed, a proposal to continue the work in a second was ignored, the suburban towns lost enthusiasm for open education. Still, in terms of teachers' professional growth, values reinforced, and friendships made, the work was satisfying. That summarizes the essence of advising, as she views it: "Someone has cared enough about [teachers] as people to join them where they are, and light a small fire from their own humanity and warmth."

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